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ABSTRACT

This paper describes an experiment in team teaching involving 25 students in a Spanish language class on the high school level. Team teaching was found to be particularly suited to vocabulary presentation, testing, culture teaching, grammar explanations, dramatization of stories and fables, pronunciation drills, and classroom conversation. It was also found that both teachers and students benefitted from team teaching in a variety of ways. Ideas, tasks, grading, and planning were shared; and teachers were motivated by peer cooperation to strive for greater excellence in teaching. Students were more highly motivated and preferred team teaching over the traditional approach. Finally, team teaching made possible more individual attention, greater variety of activities, and a more informal classroom atmosphere. The following project materials are provided: a room plan; lesson plans; independent study project topics, and student evaluation questionnaires. (Author/AM)

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AN EXPERIMENT IN TEAM TEACHING

What is Team Teaching?

A concise definition of Team Teaching is that given by M. Delbert Lobb.

> "Team Teaching is the direction of learning activities by two or more persons in committed association." [1]

Team Teaching is distinct from Turn Teaching in that it involves more than two teachers simply alternating activities; it is taking equal responsibility for learning activities.

The association mentioned by Lobb may be structured in a variety of ways. For example:

1) A master teacher supervising team members of limited experience,
2) A master teacher supervising experienced teachers,
3) A team of equally qualified teachers with one designated as leader.

Team Teaching is a subject which lends itself to varied interpretations.

Our own approach to Team Teaching most closely approximates the philosophy of the Dundee Team Teaching project in Connecticut:

> "The heart of the concept of Team Teaching lies not in the details of structure and organization, but more in the essential spirit of cooperative planning, constant collaboration, close unity, unrestrained communication, and sincere sharing." [2]

Our team consisted of two teachers. Despite different degrees of teaching experience, we did not designate a team leader. Our intention was to establish a climate of complete openess, with freedom to disagree, and an opportunity for creative self expression.

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Personnel and Facilities

Team Members:

Judy Rodgers - 8 years teaching experience in secondary education
B.A. 1966, CSU - French
M.A. 1973, DU - Spanish Literature
Currently enrolled in Ph.D program at CU
in Teaching Foreign Language

Lynda Herring-2 years T.A. at CU
1 year teaching experience in secondary education
B.A. 1968, Stanford - Spanish
M.A. 1973, CU, Spanish Literature
Professional Year for Secondary Education, CU, 1974

We found ourselves in an ideal situation to conduct a Team Teaching experiment. In partial fulfillment of the professional year program, Lynda was assigned to Heritage High School as a student teacher for the entire academic year, 1973-1974, and during the fall semester we worked closely together. In January we decided to Team Teach two classes. This necessitated an examination of school facilities, scheduling, and approval by the department chairman and the administration.

Heritage High is a well-designed, well-equipped new school with facilities which lend themselves easily to Team Teaching. Several rooms are divided by movable partitions; some classrooms are traditional closed room, others open onto a carpeted area. Class size and the nature of class activities determine which type of room is assigned to a particular class. Instead of traditional desks, trapezoidal tables and light-weight chairs are used affording easy mobility.

The Foreign Language area contains a resource center, a language laboratory, a library of reference books, dictionaries, periodicals, and several cassette recorders are available for student use. A paraprofessional is present in the center to aid students in various activities. Heritage has a large library which includes a section devoted to Spanish and Latin American culture.

Heritage follows a variable scheduling pattern. First year language classes meet five days a week. All other levels meet three days a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. As a result, teachers and students have more free time on Tuesday and Thursday than they would with a traditional schedule. Unscheduled time is used for make-up work, extra help, special assignments, and individual conferences. Students are free to meet with their teachers in the Foreign Language office.

Approval for the experiment was readily given by the department chairman. The administrators were enthusiastic and gave full support and many helpful suggestions. Interest in the experiment spread to other departments in the school, and many teachers came to observe the Team Taught classes.

Motivations and Goals

We were prompted to Team Teach for many reasons. We saw it as an opportunity to make classes more productive, more interesting, and more enjoyable for teachers and students alike.

We felt that team planning would lead to a profitable exchange of ideas, and wanted to develop the most interesting and creative format possible for classroom presentations and activities. We hoped to motivate students by appealing to individual interests and giving each student a feeling of accomplishment. We felt that Team Teaching would

help us avoid monotony and sustain a high level of student interest throughout the year. It was our belief that 2 teachers with 50 students could be more effective than 1 teacher with 25.

In addition, research revealed that very little had been done with Team Teaching in Foreign Language. We hoped that our experience could contribute information to this subject area.

Planning Techniques

Because of district curriculum guides it was necessary to follow the progression of grammar as found in the ALM first year book. Our basic procedure for planning a unit began with the selection of items to be covered and activities to be included in the unit. The term "unit" does not apply to the divisions in the ALM book except very loosely with respect to grammar. We constructed our units around a central theme, and vocabulary, reading selections, conversations, room decorations, student activities, and special projects related to that theme. Most important in our planning was the desire to achieve a varied presentation For example, a day emphasizing grammar would be followed by a day in which emphasis was placed on a cultural point, a game, or a reading.

Three weeks were spent preparing written lesson plans for the first unit. Early planning sessions went very slowly due to a desire for imaginative and well-defined plans, an overabundance of ideas, and our inexperience with team planning. As the experiment progressed, planning sessions went more smoothly and required less time.

Each day before class we reviewed the plans together. At the end of each class we wrote individual comments which we then compared and discussed.

Implementation

Two classes were selected for the Team Teaching experiment. We began with a first year class of 26 students and five weeks later added a second year class of 24 students. The classes, comprised of students from grades 9-12, were not grouped according to ability and were selected for scheduling convenience.

In conducting classroom activities we sought to most effectively utilize the presence of two teachers. We found Team Teaching to be particularly suited to vocabulary presentations, pronunciation and conversation, culture capsules, dramatization of stories and fables, grammar explanations, and testing situations. Team Teaching allowed us to work with the class as a whole, in small groups, and individually.

The classroom was decorated to relate to the vocabulary of each unit. For example, when the animal names were being learned, pinatas, posters, magazine pictures, and stuffed animals were placed in the room. In teaching the names of the animals, one teacher modeled pronunciation while the other pointed to the animal and checked student repitition of the word. When animal slides were shown, one teacher operated the projector, leaving the other free to circulate about the room, narrating each picture. In a later class session, students were required to narrate the slides and respond to questions asked by both teachers.

Pronunciation and conversation are essential components of Foreign Language learning. Both were emphasized throughout the year and, in addition, received special attention in two workshops in May. The pronunciation workshop for the first year class was enhanced by the availability of two teachers. The class was divided in order to allow more intensive practice with difficult sounds such as/v/p/v/d/t/j/g/ll/rr/. Spanish

pronunciation of nonaspirated sounds was evaluated by means of a test with a lighted candle. One teacher modeled a series of words, the other evaluated student performance. Students were required to make a tape recording of a short paragraph. They practiced reading in pairs under the supervision of one teacher in the class room. When students felt prepared, they went to the language lab where the other teacher aided them in recording the paragraph.

The conversation workshop was carried out in the second year class. We hoped to provide students with varied stimuli to informal and spontaneous conversation. We kept the atmosphere relaxed and unstructured so that students felt free to take part at any time. We used games, contests, pictures, and props to encourage talking. We provided sample conversations on various topics in an attempt to build student confidence and facilitate their participation. As they observed us conversing in Spanish, they were motivated to speak.

The presence of two teachers allows for the dramatization of cultural situations, stories, and fables. It is valuable for the students to see and hear situations in the Foreign Language and to participate in discussions afterwards. Teachers observing the experiment repeatedly commented on the effectiveness of teacher skits, and student evaluations included the skits among the favorite class activities. For example, we presented " The Tortoise and The Hare " as follows:

1) new vocabulary - explained in Spanish
2) possible morals listed on blackboard in Spanish
3) introduction of each character
4) dramatization of the fable
5) discussion of the moral
6) personalization

A variation of the dramatization approach was used for teaching culture. Two dating situations were depicted which showed a contrast between social customs of the United States and Mexico. A discussion followed in which students were asked to summarize their observations.

The main benefit of team teaching in grammar explanations is that of mobility. The teacher giving the explanation is not physically limited to the areas of the blackboard or the overhead projector, but instead can move freely throughout the room. The other teacher outlines the points being covered on the blackboard or overhead a grammar point was initially presented by one teacher, and the next day the other teacher would conduct a review of the same grammar concept. This practice enabled students to benefit from two points of view and two different explanations of the material.

In a testing situation, Team Teaching offers four main advantages:

1) The class can be divided in order to facilitate oral testing.
2) Teachers are readily available to answer students' questions during written tests.
3) Subjectivity in grading is lessened.
4) More frequent testing is possible.

Evaluation of students can be more thorough and more objective as two points of view are incorporated in determining student grades. This helps reduce the "halo effect" in grading and gives the student the benefit of doubly careful consideration.

Evaluation

Because we wanted opinions and observations from other teachers, administrators, and students, we devised various evaluation forms. Teachers, administrators, and visiting

students were asked to complete the forms as
their evaluations at the end of the Team Tea
teacher, student, and administrator comment

Teacher Comments

All observing teachers agreed that student-t
interest levels were high, and individuals re
peatedly observed that students seemed very

"You both paid attention to all member
Good rapport."

"Good student interest, participation,
having a good time (as well as the tea
to and speaking Spanish."

"Students were not embarrassed to mak
material on both teacher and student si

Student Comments

Students generally agreed that Team Teachi

"I prefer Team Teaching because it ke
and awake."

"Mainly I like the sense of humor and

"...it was a lot more fun..it really m

Students also commented favorably on incre
of view relating to the subject matter.

"..each student gets more help and yo

"...because you get the knowledge of two instead of one."

"...more ideas about what we could do in class."

"...the different opinions which are brought out, not just one idea."

They liked the relaxed atmosphere of the class and the fact that there were few discipline problems.

"The teachers are more relaxed. It's not so much of the usual class atmosphere."

"I felt more comfortable. The teachers were really friendly with us."

"I liked the control two teachers had on the class. It was more understandable."

"The class behaves better and more gets done."

The majority of the students' comments were positive and enthusiastic.

"We never could have done them (class activities) if there was only one teacher."

"This class has been the class that picks me up for the day...It's been the funnest class I've ever taken."

Administrators' Comments

Two methodologists, Dr. Charles Stansfield and Dr. Rodolfo Garcia, from the University of Colorado, observed the Team Teaching and were extremely supportive. They felt that the experiment was exciting and innovative and were impressed with the level of student

Conclusions

The experiment was exciting and enjoyable for the teachers and students involved. The students appeared to be more enthusiastic and attentive with two teachers, and found it easier to maintain a stimulating atmosphere in the classroom. We sought to encourage individual expression in a setting where fun was an integral part of the learning process. In addition, students watching two teachers interacting with each other, as well as with them, were able to see teachers in a less formal light. Enjoyment of the Foreign Language seemed to be contagious.

We found one the highlights of Team Teaching to be sharing; sharing of ideas, sharing of knowledge, sharing of experiences, and sharing of work. Reciprocal motivation and division of tasks made it possible for us to devote extra time to preparing games, visuals, prop collections, and room decorations.

Initially we each felt a certain awkwardness when not actively involved in teaching the class. As the experiment progressed we were able to resolve this problem. The teacher who circulated throughout the room was able to participate in the class in the following ways:

3) deal with discipline problems or, in many cases, prevent them.

In addition, the teacher not actively involved in a particular activity learned to relax, feel less self conscious, and interject comments when she wanted to contribute.

Although our own experiment was relatively problem-free, we were able to see potential difficulties. Our team consisted of only two people; we had similar objectives, a similar approach to teaching, and similar expectations for student performance. Because we shared a basic outlook, we had no serious differences of opinion. Although we did not intend for one teacher to be the team leader, in practice we found that Judy seemed to determine the basic direction of the team. One plausible explanation is that of time: Lynda was initially involved in classes with other teachers and was devoting her time to many other responsibilities. In addition the inherent relationship a student teacher-cooperating teacher situation may have contributed to Judy's assumption of the leadership role. Teaching experience with high school students gives Judy expertise in selection of activities. Possibly in any group situation, one person will emerge the dominant figure.

Another concern in Team Teaching is that of students attempting to play one teacher against the other. We experienced two incidents of this nature. We feel that if team

members were not aware of this possibility and not in agreement as to procedure and policy, the situation could get out of control.

As a result of our experiment we have established certain guidelines for Team Teaching. Within the framework we have developed, there are certain areas we would modify if given the opportunity. Primarily, we would lessen the room-centered approach. We feel that Team Teaching could be used to develop a wider range of activities which would not necessarily take place in the classroom. One teacher could supervise students working in the library, the language lab, the resource center, or, possibly, outside the school building. Related to this desire for more flexibility is grouping of students according to ability and interests, or for special projects. We would strive for greater individualization in classroom work.

We realize that our experiment was facilitated by having only 25 students with two teachers. We firmly believe Team Teaching would be just as effective with a group of 40-50 students, and would enjoy the opportunity to substantiate this hypothesis.

The experiment in Team Teaching has brought forth many new ideas and approaches. We found it worthwhile and most enjoyable. In our opinion, the experiment was entirely successful.

FOOTNOTES

1. Lobb, Delbert, M. Practical Aspects of Team Teaching, (Palo Alto, California; Learon Publishers Inc., 1964), p.6

2. The Dundee Team Teaching Project,(Greenwich, Conn., Institute of Field Studies, 1966), p. 91.

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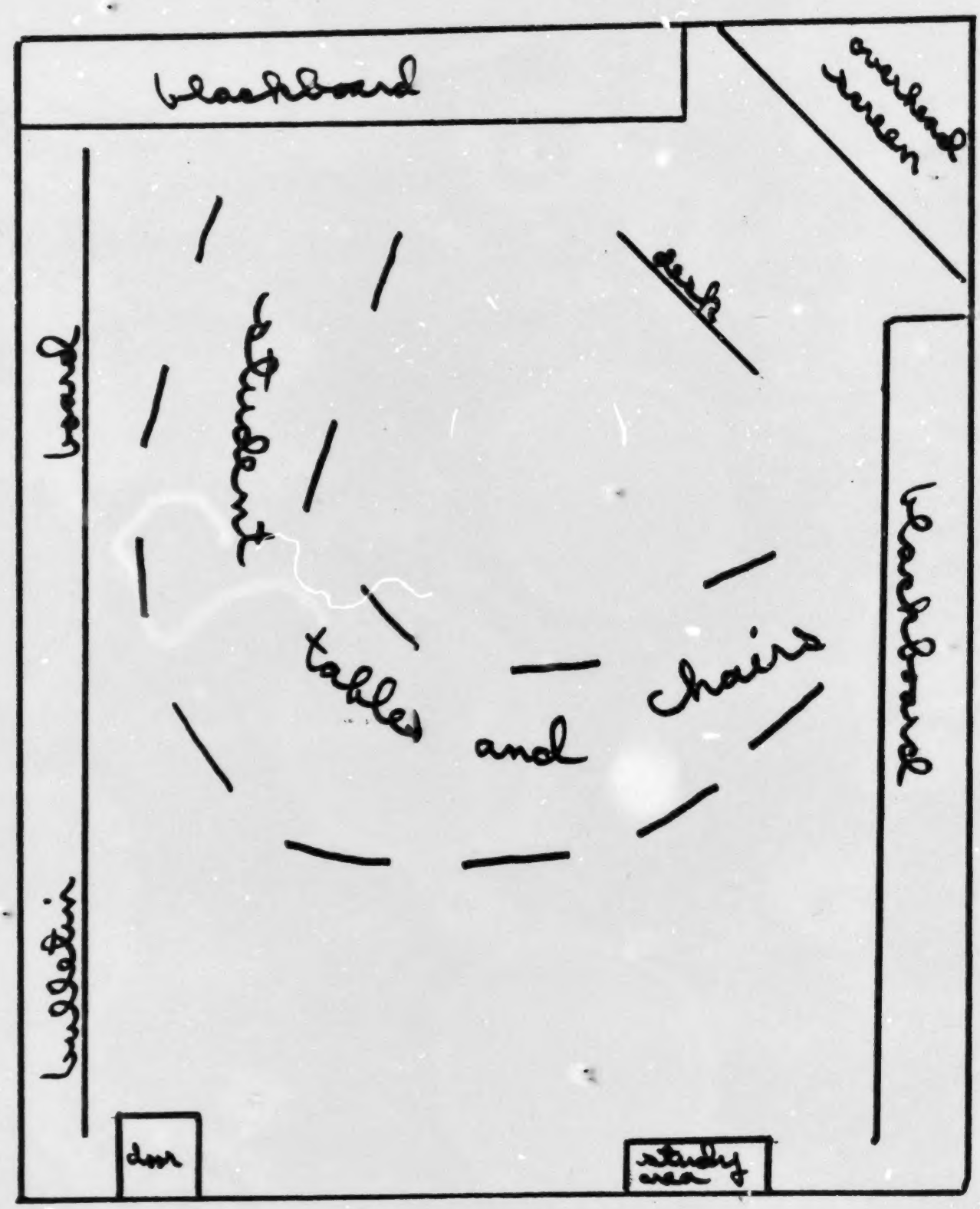
blackboard
overhead screen
desk
bulletin board
student tables and chairs
blackboard
door
study area

Room Plan

Spanish I Materials

Lesson Plans

Day I - Animal Unit

Equipment

1. slide projector
2. animal slides
3. vocabulary lists - names of animals

Activities

I. Teacher A - take role Teacher B - Explain new unit content, and give general outline

II. A and B pass out vocabulary lists

III. A go over vocabulary lists, model each word
B circulate and check students' pronunciation

IV. A show animal slides B narrate slides

V. A ask questions on slides B drill pronunciation

VI. A Explain Saber and its uses B write information on board
A drill forms of Saber What kind of a verb is it?
What is an irregular verb?
How is Saber irregular?
A give sample sentences.

VII. B explain Conocer and its uses A write information on board
B drill forms of Conocer.
B give sample sentences.
B give assignment - prepare for short quiz on Saber and Conocer tommorow.

VIII. Divide class into two groups - one teacher per group
1) students drilled individually on forms of Saber and Conocer
2) students make up sentences using forms of Saber and Conocer

Lesson Plans

Day X - Animal Unit

Equipment

1. corrected quizzes
2. pictures and props in room
3. animal independent study sheets

Activities

I. A - take role

B review animals using pictures and props in room

¿Dónde vive este animal?
¿Es salvaje o doméstico?
¿Qué come este animal?
¿Qué es más grande un ___ o un ____?
¿Tienes un _____?
¿Hay _____ en clase?

II. A and B return quizzes on stem changing verbs. Discuss.

III. B explain group activities. Divide class into five groups of five. Each group given a location

1) la tienda de animales domésticos
2) la selva
3) el desierto
4) el jardín zoológico
5) las montañas

IV. Groups practice - ten minutes - nothing may be written
Each group must dramatize its situation, discussing what is present in the location they have been given
A and B circulate, helping students.

V. Group presentations

VI. Discussion and comment period A and B

VII. A and B pass out animal project sheets
A explains each option, due Friday

VIII. B introduce Present Progressive

1) three meanings of present tense
2) new way to express I am talking
3) use of Present Progressive

A write information on board

Los Animales

Independent Study Projects

I. Due Friday.

II. You may choose any, all, or none of these projects.

III. Write a poem in Spanish about an animal. It can be free verse or rhyming.

IV. Draw five animals and write a short description of each in Spanish. (Can be imaginary animals.)

V. Draw a cartoon and write the dialogue in Spanish. For example, you could find a comic strip and transfer the ideas into Spanish.

VI. Collect five animal pictures and write a short description of each in Spanish.

Spanish II Materials

Lesson Plans

Day I - Diversions, Dating, and Social Customs Unit

Equipment

1. props for dating skits

Activities

I. A take role B pass out unit objectives and vocabulary lists

II. A and B present two skits, Mexican girl and American boy on date, American girl and Mexican boy on date

III. Discussion of skits

IV. A explain aquel, aquello, lo B.write information on board

V. B lead student drill

VI. A and B - class divided in half, individual drill

VII. A and B give students hypothetical situations in which they must ask someone for a date

VIII. A explain Dating Game to be played next class meeting Give assignment to prepare list of questions to be used in game

Diversions, Dating, and Social Customs
Objectives and Activities

I. Learn five items you would use to get ready for a date.
II. Learn five activities you would do to get ready for a date.
III. Learn three ways to ask for a date.
IV. Learn three ways to accept a date.
V. Learn three ways to refuse a date.
VI. Learn five places you could go on a date.
VII. Do a dating skit.
VIII. Do one independent study.
IX. Grammar items: 1. Learn use of aquel, aquello, lo.
2. Learn use of compund constructions in past.

Independent Study Projects
Diversiones, Dating, Social Customs

Must do one, can do more if desired.

I. Written or Oral - Report in Spanish on one "diversión" Discuss it or explain it, give your opinions and ideas.

II. Written or Oral - "Las chicas pueden pedir citas" Sí o No? Explain your reasons.

III. Draw a cartoon or a comic strip that has to do with a dating situation. (characters converse in Spanish)

IV. Written - Contrast dating customs of Mexicans and North Americans. Which are better? Why?

Student Evaluation

I. How do you feel about school in general?

II. Why are you taking Spanish?

III. Compared to your other classes, do you like Spanish more, less, or about the same?

IV. Do you prefer one teacher or team teaching? Why?

V. Do you feel that you received more attention in the team teaching situation?

VI. What did you like about Team Teaching?

VII. What did you dislike?

VIII. Do you feel you were able to learn better in the team teaching situation or with one teacher?

IX. Please add any comments or suggestions that you feel are pertinent.

Name _____ Date _____

I. Organization of room

A. Is the room arranged in such a way that it affords maximum utilization of the team teaching situation?

B. Is the appearance of the room pleasing?

C. Do you have any comments as to the arrangement of the room?

D. Do the students seem comfortable with the physical arrangement of the room?

II. Class activities

A. Is the lesson well organized?

B. Do the activities planned effectively use two teachers?

C. Is there enough variety of activities?

D. Did you feel the activities were well balanced, i.e. grammmar, oral work, etc.?

III. Observations of student behavior

A. Do the students seem interested?

B. Do they seem to enjoy the class?

C. How would you rate student participation?

D. Do students seem to be benefitting from the team teaching situation per se?

IV. General opinions

A. What did you see that you likec?

B. What did you see that you disliked?

V. Further comments, suggestions and criticisms.

ABSTRACT

Team teaching is an effective and stimulating technique for teaching foreign language. We designed a program for team teaching which was successfully implemented in two Spanish classes. We concluded that team teaching is particularly suited to vocabulary presentation, testing, teaching culture, grammar explanations, dramatization of stories and fables, pronunciation drills, and classroom conversation. We personally benefitted from the team teaching situation in a variety of ways. We enjoyed the sharing of ideas, tasks, grading, and planning. Teaching in cooperation with a peer was mutually stimulating and was an added incentive to strive for excellence in the classroom. Students also were more highly motivated in the team teaching situation and their evaluations revealed a definite preference for team teaching over the traditional approach. Team teaching made possible more individual attention, greater variety of activities, and a more informal classroom atmosphere.